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Science

Massive Basin Aquifer Found in Kenya; Can Provide Fresh Water for Up to 70 Years

Tiffany Kaiser - September 12, 2013 11:24 AM

(Source: ITV News)

It was discovered in northwest Kenya about 300 meters underground

A huge water reserve has been discovered in Kenya, and it has enough to meet Kenya's H₂O-related needs for the next 70 years.

Through the use of satellite, geological and radar technology, the Kenyan government and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have discovered an aquifer in northwest Kenya about 300 meters underground.

An aquifer is a an underground layer of water-bearing material -- such as gravel and sand -- and water can be pulled from the materials through the use of a well.

The new aquifer is called Lotikipi Basin, and it is approximately 100 km (62 miles) by 66 km (41 miles) in size. It has a surface area of 4,164 km² and contains an estimated 200 billion cubic meters of fresh water.

RTI said the water passing underground is easy to reach for drinking and agricultural purposes.

To put its size into perspective, Lotikipi alone holds 900 percent more than Kenya's current water reserves, and Loch Ness could fit into it approximately 25 times.

The Kenyan government is planning ways to use the resource for the country while UNESCO plans ways of finding similar water reserves in other countries in Africa.

"I'm not saying this could solve all of the problems because from finding water to providing water to the population is another step because we need to have investment, we need to put in place infrastructure and so on, said Abou Amani of UNESCO. "But we have seen the system and the fact water is there, and that is extremely important and it could be a game changer within the country."

Source: RTI